

## State Government Municipal Day Agenda

### National Life, Montpelier - October 20, 2023

7:30 am	<i>Registration Table Opens (and is staffed all day)</i>					
8:30 – 9:30	<i>Plenary Session &amp; Coffee in the National Life Cafeteria: Chief Recovery Officer Douglas Farnham</i>					
9:45 – 11:00	1. Build Back Better Municipalities After A Flood	2. Rebuilding and Recovery After the Flood: Using Permit Navigator	3. Planning for Transportation Resilience	4. Vermont’s Environmental Justice Law	5. Source Water Protection Tools and Resources	6. Regenerating Riparian Resiliency
11:15 – 12:30 pm	7. FEMA Maps: Information for Flood Resilience	8. Natural Resource Inventories for More Effective Land Use Planning	9. Municipal Vulnerability Index: Your Town’s Vulnerabilities and Climate Change	10. The Water Infrastructure Sponsorship Program (WISPr)	11. Wastewater, Drinking Water, Subdivisions, and Town Records	12. Information and Funding for Advanced Wood Heating Systems
12:30 – 1:30	<i>Buffet Lunch in the National Life Cafeteria</i>					
1:30 – 2:30	13. Disaster Debris Management	14. Using BioFinder for Land Use Planning	15. Weather Forecast Calls for “Blown out Roads and Driveways”	16. Working With Farms Regulated by the Required Agricultural Practices	17. Accessing Inflation Reduction Act Funds	18. How to Find and Use Census Data for Community Planning
2:45 – 3:45	19. Funding to Create Flood Resilient Communities	20. Map Data for Municipalities	21. Vermont Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network	22. Lake and Shoreland Regulations	23. State Lands in your Town	

## Workshop Session 1 (9:45 – 11:00 am)

### **1. Build Back Better Municipalities After a Flood**

Since Tropical Storm Irene in 2011, Vermont has built back better. The state has greatly improved rules, regulations and permits that help provide greater flood resiliency. Learn about successful infrastructure projects that are less prone to flooding. Also learn about techniques that provide natural flood resilience, are low/no cost to taxpayers, and benefit fish and wildlife habitat.

### **2. Rebuilding and Recovery After the Flood: How Permit Navigator Can Help with Understanding State Environmental Permitting Requirements**

Are you trying to understand what state environmental permits you may need to rebuild after flooding? Are you reviewing local project applications and want more information on what state permits will be needed? If so, the Permit Navigator can assist with understanding what environmental permits your recovery projects will need.

The Agency of Natural Resources' Permit Navigator is a free service that offers guidance to Vermonters on what state environmental permits may be needed for their projects. Vermonters can use the Permit Navigator (<https://dec.vermont.gov/permitnavigator>) to make informed decisions about a project, including the cost of permitting and average permitting time. Join us to learn: 1) where to find the tool, 2) how to use it, and 3) and how you can use the results in your municipal review of projects. This tool is great for landowners and Town Officials alike!

### **3. Planning For Resilience: Transportation Resilience Planning Tool (TRPT)**

The Transportation Resilience Planning Tool (TRPT) (<https://vtrans.vermont.gov/planning/transportation-resilience>) is a statewide web-based application that identifies bridges, culverts and road embankments that are vulnerable to damage from floods, estimates risk based on the vulnerability and criticality of roadway segments, and identifies potential mitigation measures based on factors driving the vulnerability. The tool's distinctive feature is in the innovative methodology used to categorize flood vulnerability as well as the conveyance of this information to be accessible by technical and non-technical audiences. The TRPT is designed to inform a range of applications and stages of decision-making from planning to grant applications and capital budgeting.

### **4. Vermont's Environmental Justice Law**

In this workshop participants will have an opportunity to learn about the State of Vermont Environmental Justice (EJ) Law (Act 154 of 2022). There will be an overview presentation of the EJ Law's scope and purpose and relevant updates about the implementation process. Time will be provided for open conversation and answering questions from participants. Participants will leave this workshop with a sense of the different avenues for engaging further with the roll out of the EJ Law.

### **5. Protect your Groundwater: Source Water Protection, tools and resources**

Protecting your public drinking water source from potential contamination is a win win for you, your customers and the environment. Learn what resources and tools are available for source water protection for public drinking water supplies with a focus on managing risk from contaminants. Learn about strategies and activities the water system can take to protect the quality and quantity of its drinking water source(s). Bring your ideas, working solutions, and success stories for managing risk to share with other water systems.

## **6. Regenerating Riparian Resiliency (after a water disturbance)**

In this session, come learn about invasive plants, including some info on identification, treatment options, and regeneration. This is a great workshop for those who have experienced flood-damage or are interested in dam-removal situations. You will leave knowing what to look out for, what to do about it, and where to turn for help.

## **Workshop Session 2 (11:15 am – 12:30 pm)**

## **7. FEMA Maps and Information for Flood Resilience**

How can our communities use flood hazard maps to identify places where our communities can develop safely? How can this information inform our flood recovery and avoid compounding the disasters experienced by our family, friends and neighbors?

In this presentation we will learn about the FEMA flood hazard map updates underway [bit.ly/fema-map-update](https://bit.ly/fema-map-update), and how this information can help our communities thrive.

## **8. Natural Resource Inventories: Learning More About Your Town for More Effective Land Use Planning**

A Natural Resource Inventory (NRI) is a survey of noteworthy natural resources in a given area, parcel, town, or region, and can include everything from wetlands, to rare species, to habitat blocks, groundwater resources – and more. Often, these inventories are the most appropriate scale of data to do better town land use planning or better manage a town forest. But they aren't necessarily easy or inexpensive to do. Learn more about the options in NRIs, the RFP process, the types of data involved and how to effectively use the results.

## **9. Municipal Vulnerability Index: A Tool for Understanding Your Town's Vulnerabilities to Climate Change**

The Municipal Vulnerability Index (MVI) currently under development by the Climate Action Office is a mapping tool intended to help municipalities understand their vulnerabilities to climate change across a range of social, economic, and biophysical factors. The MVI will help Vermont communities identify where climate change is placing pressure on transportation, electrical grid, housing, emergency services, communications infrastructure, and other factors, and will help inform municipal planning priorities such as hazard mitigation plans, local energy plans, or other climate related efforts. The MVI is set to be completed in late winter 2023, and this session will give participants the opportunity to learn about the factors and framework that will go into the MVI and shape the ultimate outcomes and design of the tool. What tool outputs would be helpful for your municipality to have to be better prepared for the next flood or heatwave? How would a tool like this be used in your climate-related planning processes? Help answer these questions (and more!) to make the MVI a useful resource for your communities' conversations on climate change.

## **10. The Water Infrastructure Sponsorship Program (WISPr)**

What is the Water Infrastructure Sponsorship Program (WISPr) and how can it save municipalities money while also supporting water quality? In this workshop we will outline the goals of WISPr, how the program allows municipalities to save on existing CWSRF loans, the types of natural resources projects that are eligible for the program, and updates we are making to the program. Attendees will learn how WISPr serves to benefit municipalities both financially and environmentally.

## **11. Wastewater, Drinking Water, Subdivisions, and Town Records: How do they all flow together?**

Land division and development are tied to a property's ability to meet water supply and wastewater system needs. There are close relationships between the land records for a property and Drinking Water and Wastewater System permits and requirements. This presentation will go over the relationships, focusing on lister cards, SPAN designations, property owner's responsibilities, how to enforce compliance conditions, such as occupancy and operating failed systems, and why the relationships are important for the protection of human health and the environment.

## **12. Information and Funding Resources for Advanced Wood Heating Systems; Utilizing a Renewable Fuel Source and Building a Resilient Local Supply Chain**

Wood heat provides a sustainable and renewable heating fuel choice that encourages sustainable forest management and is locally available! Join this session if you are interested in learning more about advanced wood heating technologies and equipment, how other towns successfully installed AWH systems and if your town has buildings that are good candidates for conversion, and available grant and technical resources to see your projects through to fruition.

## **Workshop Session 3 (1:30 – 2:30 pm)**

### **13. Disaster Debris Management**

The flooding of July 2023 created significant amounts of flood debris for residents, businesses, and towns to manage and at times also created health and environmental challenges. This workshop will help towns learn how to prepare for future flood-related incidents. We'll review the State's Debris Management Plan, requirements for FEMA reimbursements, how to communicate debris separation guidance to reduce dangers of hazardous materials, and other resources that the State might have at its disposal.

### **14. Using BioFinder for Land Use Planning**

Join Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department's Conservation Planners to learn about BioFinder 3.0, a free online portal showing the state's most important ecological areas and biodiversity data. We'll explore how [BioFinder](#) can help land use planners access important ecological data, identify significant forest blocks and habitat connectors, and comply with Act 171. This workshop is intended for members of conservation commissions, planning commissions, development review boards, as well as professional planners and interested citizens. Join us as we work towards planning a vibrant, ecologically healthy future in Vermont

### **15. Weather Forecast “Blown out Roads and Driveways” - Why Culvert Size and Wetland Protection Matters; Permitting for Road Infrastructure to Help Minimize Potential Flooding**

In today's world, more rain is falling in VT in more extreme concentrations resulting in an increased chance of localized flooding. This presentation outlines why culvert/bridge sizing is important and why the state requires appropriate sizing for stream crossings with necessary permits to support flood resiliency and to protect water quality and the bugs/fish in the streams. Many projects will require a Stream Alteration permit. The 2023 MRGP has revised intermittent stream culvert sizing guidance. The Wetland Program has 4 tiers of permitting/permissions for stream crossing projects. This information applies to municipal roads and private properties.

## **16. Working with Farms Regulated by the Required Agricultural Practices**

The farming landscape is a cornerstone identity of picturesque Vermont. Web search “Vermont” and the first page of images will have a barn, rolling meadow, or touch of the rural working landscape. But despite the postcard appeal, do farms have a “free pass” to do whatever they want? In this workshop, Agency of Agriculture staff will provide an overview of farming, the Required Agricultural Practices (RAPs), and the intersection with local municipal regulations. This year, this workshop will dig further into what is and is not regulated by the RAPs and provide resources for working with farms in your town.

## **17. Accessing Inflation Reduction Act Funds for your Town**

The Agency of Natural Resources Climate Action Office (CAO), in coordination with other state and local partners, is well positioned to design and implement priority and comprehensive actions to mitigate climate change. As such, the CAO received a \$3 million planning grant from the Environmental Protection Agency called the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG). The work that will take place to implement the CPRG is built upon the framework of the Vermont Global Warming Solutions Act, long established programmatic work, and a recently adopted Initial Vermont Climate Action Plan. To incorporate the energy and climate planning of Vermont municipalities and regional planning organizations into CPRG planning, CAO is partnering with Vermont RPCs to survey existing municipal and regional climate and energy plans and also provide technical and policy support for municipalities to update or adopt climate and energy plans for incorporation into the CPRG. To complement the RPCs’ work with municipalities, this workshop will support deepening engagement to municipalities in this area so that they can ultimately develop plans to leverage funding for their towns to support climate action.

## **18. How to Find and Use Census Data for Community Planning**

The U.S. Census Bureau is the premier source of data about our communities. Community data from the Census includes indicators like population size, demographic composition, housing, and financial characteristics. Census data also includes business and industry data, workforce characteristics, and much, much more. We’ll provide an overview of available indicators relevant to Vermont communities, show you where to find the data and best practices for using and presenting data about your community.

## **Workshop Session 4 (2:45 – 3:45 pm)**

## **19. Funding to Create Flood Resilient Communities**

This session will give an overview of flood mitigation projects completed after Tropical Storm Irene as well as projects underway following the July 2023 flooding event. Session will include projects funded under VEM's Flood Resilient Communities Fund (FRCF) as well as through FEMA Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA). Participants will learn about project types they may be able to implement within their communities and how to access available funding.

## **20. Map Data for Municipalities: Keeping Up With Current and Future Resources**

Each year brings new and updated map information available for your town to use in carrying out its responsibilities. Knowing what map resources exist, what they represent and what problems they can help solve, who maintains them, and how to access them are key requirements for their effective use. This talk will cover a breadth of freely available digital map resources in Vermont that apply to Municipal tasks and needs, with focus on the above to help keep up with constant change.

## **21. Why Your Town Should Join the Vermont Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network**

VTWARN is available to all water and wastewater systems, public or private, big or small, in Vermont and allows water and wastewater systems in Vermont to receive rapid mutual aid and assistance from other systems to continue providing services if they are impaired by unforeseen staff absences, materials shortages, equipment failures, or catastrophes. This workshop will explain the WARN, the benefits of a FREE membership, and provide examples of how the WARN can help in an emergency.

## **22. Lake and Shoreland Regulations**

Development on lakeshore property has a direct impact on lake water quality, shoreline erosion, and wildlife habitat. This workshop will describe an overview of development regulations, including Lake Encroachment regulations and the Shoreland Protection Act. Additionally, the workshop will cover what types of activities require a permit and how to best handle potential violations. This workshop will be beneficial for municipalities that include lakefront property. Time for questions will be included in the workshop!

## **23. State Lands in Your Town**

The Agency of Natural Resources owns over 370,000 acres across Vermont and acquires new land every year in the form of State Forests, State Parks, Wildlife Management Areas, streambank parcels, access areas, and more. Join ANR state land managers to learn more about the purposes of state land ownership, as well as how this land is acquired, managed, and how citizens can participate in the management planning process. We will also discuss the relationship between the state and towns in which ANR-owned land is located